



February 22, 2019

Dear Senator Leone, Representative Lemar, members of the Transportation Committee,

I am writing in support of HB 7140 An Act Concerning Recommendations By The Department Of Transportation Regarding Seat Belts, Motorcycle Helmets, The Operation Lifesaver Program, Maintenance Vehicles And Transportation Statutes.

My name is Sarah Raskin. I am a Board-Certified Clinical Neuropsychologist, a Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Trinity College, and the President of the Board of Directors of the Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut. I reside in West Hartford, Connecticut.

I have worked with brain injury survivors for over thirty years. I know you will hear from many others about the importance of motorcycle helmets to save lives. There is no doubt that they do that. You will also hear about savings in terms of the costs of acute trauma care. There is no doubt about that either.

However, I want to talk to you about people living with brain injury. Brain injury is a chronic illness. The symptoms of brain injury last a lifetime. My career has been devoted to creating rehabilitation strategies for people with brain injury and I can tell you that the best strategy of all is prevention. Brain injury can include physical symptoms like difficulty walking, talking, using your hands, or swallowing. But it also includes changes to cognition and personality. People with brain injury often have difficulty with memory, speech, planning and problem solving. Their judgement can be altered as can their impulse control. For many of them their very personality and sense of self is forever altered. And because motorcycle accidents most often happen to young people, we are talking about living with these changes for many many years.

Not only is this difficult and painful for the survivor but it is also a new way of life for the family members and loved ones. Not only are these changes emotionally draining, but they are financially draining.

People with brain injury are often no longer able to work or not at the same income level they once had. Their quality of life is reduced. Again, this is for a lifetime. And chronic care often racks up long term medical expenses for outpatient care.

My husband and I have taken long motorcycle trips throughout New England. We have no problem with people enjoying rides on their motorcycles. We enjoy rides on motorcycles. But we wouldn't dream of riding without a helmet, just as we wouldn't ride in a car without a seatbelt, or drive with a baby without a car seat. These are small prices to pay compared to the costs of living with brain injury. When you consider the demands of motorcycle riders please count ours among them.

Thank you for your time on this important matter. I strongly urge you to support Raised Bill 7140. If you have any questions about this testimony, please do not hesitate to contact me at [sarah.raskin@trincoll.edu](mailto:sarah.raskin@trincoll.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah A. Raskin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' and 'R'.

Sarah A. Raskin, PhD, ABPP/ABCN  
Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Program